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581 131. When their daughters are capable of being mothers, their progenitors positively warn them of the obligations of the state /62/ of matrimony, especially that they have to be esenekama-yen, industrious, or, more literally, recipients full of work; in the same way they advise them to seek a husband for themselves, but that he must also be industrious, especially a good hunter and fisherman. (Concerning this latter see the very practical and expressive counsels of these patriarchs, which we transcribe in part in another place.)

584 132. "When their daughters have a fiancé or suitor, their parents observe in silence," (I continue copying from Ernesto) "and if they see that he not a very good worker and they don't like his behavior, they say so to their daughter, but in such a way that the fiancé hears it; this makes them despondent and to reflect. But also sometimes they visit each other at night without the parents finding out about it."

584 576 From what has just been said it can be deduced with how much reason the clearest manifestation that an Indian can make to a girl with whom he is in love or to a mother that he is in love with her daughter is to give them presents of game and fish. And the acceptance of these and, especially, the preparing and serving of them is a manifest sign of accepting his love or at least that he may court her. For the same reason it is not accepted as a rule of morality and of etiquette that an Indian girl should offer drink and food to anybody who is not her husband or her declared and accepted fiancé. How well does the proverb say that "gifts crack rocks!"

585 133. Marriage does not have any special ceremony; it is simply what is noted in Pimentel's account, which we shall copy later.

583 But after the union has taken place, the most generous Indians (and there are no lack of the other sort) usually remain for some time almost as though they were laborers for their parents-in-law, paying in some way for the delights and abilities of the beloved wife rather than the parents-in-law

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/63 cont./ people in these cases usually exaggerate to the point of saying that "just as a dog joins with a bitch and a horse with a mare, thus an Indian man should marry an Indian woman, and a Creole a Creole." And they customarily also say that if Creoles want to marry their daughters, they must bring their sisters to marry Indian men.

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136. Now, so that the similarity of these Indians to the ancient Indians of Caracas can be seen, I am going to transcribe a paragraph of Pimentel's geographic account, which deals with the subject of marriages.

In regard to marriages and the absence of formalities and festivities, as well as the spontaneity and absolute liberty of those who contract it, the present-day situation also coincides with the ancient one of the Caracas Indians, of whom J. Pimentel writes: "In marriages they have this system: when an Indian finds an Indian woman who pleases him, he gives her to understand this with words, and if it seems to him that she responds favorably, he goes to her house, and if she gives him something to sit on and brings him a gourd bowl of water so that he can wash and puts out something for him to eat, he then understands the will of the girl and they go and sleep together without it seeming bad to her parents and relatives, and thus they are married, and in this marriage only their will keeps it going for a greater or lesser period of time." /64/

## Chapter XVI

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### What Should Be Understood By Kanaima?

137. The firm belief in Kanaima. 138. General statements. 139. Magic properties. 140. Are they happy with these ideas? 141. What is the missionaries' idea of the Kanaima?

## Marriage

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178 Like some other customs, marriage among the Kamarakotos seems to be in course of modification in two directions: by the simplification or omission of old elements, social custom once having been both more complex and more rigid than it is now, and by a tendency, encouraged by the more "progressive" men, to approximate Venezuelan customs as far as these are known. Neither of these trends is, however, as yet strong enough markedly to have modified Kamarakoto society. Thus there is a definite feeling that polygamy and what are, by other standards, incestuous unions are not to be encouraged, but both are still common, and, as illustrating the other trend, bride-purchase as an essential requisite has been abandoned, but clear vestiges of it survive.

585 Marriage in a Venezuelan legal sense is, of course, non-existent. There is no authority or register for civil marriage and no priest for religious marriage.
581 Nevertheless it is proper to speak of marriage and not, as a somewhat stiff-spined student in British Guiana has done, merely of "the cohabitation of male
[588] and female." More casual cohabitation certainly occurs but it is clearly distinguished, even by the Indians, from marriage, a union which is by intention permanent and in which the social and economic considerations are at least as strong as the sexual. The fact that the ceremonies and formalities in vogue in civilized communities are omitted does not alter the fact that this is true marriage in all proper senses of the word.

584 The initiative in marriage may be taken by any of the parties concerned, the man, the woman, and the woman's parents. The man's parents are apparently not considered to be interested parties. Marriage does not take place without consent of the bride and normally the consent of her parents, or at least
583 of her mother, is likewise required. Presents may be given to the bride's parents,
584 and especially to her mother, by the prospective groom, but I was assured that this is by way of persuasion and to promote good feeling and not a prerequisite
[178] to the obtaining of the woman. Nevertheless, this probably is a vestige of the formerly widespread, probably universal, custom of bride-purchase. The purchase commonly took the form of personal service to the bride's father, and a typical example of this occurs in the Kamarakoto legend of Maichak, but this custom has largely been dropped. The groom, naturally well disposed toward the bride's parents, may voluntarily assist them but is never, I was told, obliged
[562] to do so. The repeated emphasis on the bride's mother, rather than her father, is also peculiar and is significant of the relatively high status of women in the tribe.

585 There are no ceremonies or formalities of any sort. When the parties are agreed, the bride and groom simply start living together.

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177 The Kamarakotos are polygamous, that is, polygynous. There was some reticence in supplying information as to numbers of wives, an indication of